

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. An intelligent, program controlled system is provided, the system having programming for identifying taxable financial transactions, collecting data based on the transactions, calculating any taxes due on the transactions, reporting the same to a selected government authority, and periodically remitting funds corresponding to the tax owed to the government authorities over an interactive communications network, the system comprising:

a first server for hosting a first virtual portal having at least one application for providing e-content to end users, the application including a network browser for accessing, displaying and transmitting data over the network;

a second server for hosting a second virtual portal having at least one application for receiving data from the first server and for parsing the data received;

a communications infrastructure linking the first and second servers to one another;

a third server for hosting a third virtual portal having at least one application for receiving transactional data from the second server, parsing the data received for XML-based data, interpreting the XML-based data for selected data processing operations, storing the XML-based data in a first selected file of a first database, computing any taxes due on the corresponding transaction, storing the tax due in a second selected first database file; and

a fourth server for hosting a fourth virtual portal having at least one application for receiving XML-based data from the third server, converting the second selected first database file from an XML-based format to a TXP-based format for receipt by an automated clearinghouse network, and periodically transmitting the second file, through the network, to a selected financial institution for remission of funds corresponding to the transactional data to the

government authority.

2. An intelligent, program controlled system is provided, the system having programming for identifying taxable financial transactions, collecting data based on the transactions, calculating any taxes due on the transactions, reporting the same to a selected government authority, and periodically remitting funds corresponding to the tax owed to the government authorities over an interactive communications network, the system comprising:

a first server for hosting a first virtual portal having at least one application for providing e-content to end users, the application including a network browser for accessing, displaying and transmitting data over the network;

a second server for hosting a second virtual portal having at least one application for receiving data from the first server and for parsing the data received;

a communications infrastructure linking the first and second servers to one another;

a third server for hosting a third virtual portal having at least one application for receiving transactional data from the second server, parsing the data received for XML-based data, interpreting the XML-based data for selected data processing operations, storing the XML-based data in a first selected file of a first database, computing any taxes due on the corresponding transaction and storing the tax due in a second selected first database file;

a fourth server for hosting a fourth virtual portal having at least one application for receiving XML-based data from the third server, converting the second selected first database file from an XML-based format to a TXP-based format for receipt by an automated clearinghouse network, and periodically transmitting the second file, through the network, to a selected financial institution for remission of funds corresponding to the transactional data to the

government authority;

a fifth server for hosting a fifth virtual portal having at least one application redundant to that of the third server; and

a sixth server for hosting a sixth virtual portal having at least one application redundant to that of the fourth server.

3. An intelligent, program controlled system is provided, the system having programming for identifying taxable financial transactions, collecting data based on the transactions, calculating any taxes due on the transactions, reporting the same to a selected government authority, and periodically remitting funds corresponding to the tax owed to the government authorities over an interactive communications network, the system comprising:

a first server for hosting a first virtual portal having at least one application for providing e-content to end users, the application including a network browser for accessing, displaying and transmitting data over the network;

a second server for hosting a second virtual portal having at least one application for receiving data from the first server and for parsing the data received for XML-based data;

a communications infrastructure linking the first and second servers to one another;

a third server for hosting a third virtual portal having at least one application for processing XML-based data from the second server, the third server hosting a standard interface for receiving the XML-based transactional, interpreting the XML-based data for selected data processing operations, and invoking processing of the XML-based data;

a fourth server for hosting a fourth virtual portal having at least one application for receiving transactional data from the third server, storing the XML-based data in a first selected

file of a first database, computing any taxes due on the corresponding transaction and storing the tax due in a second selected first database file;

a fifth server for hosting a fifth virtual portal having at least one application for receiving XML-based data from the fourth server, converting the second selected first database file from an XML-based format to a TXP-based format for receipt by an automated clearinghouse network, and periodically transmitting the second file, through the network, to a selected financial institution for remission of funds corresponding to the transactional data to the government authority;

a sixth server for hosting a sixth virtual portal having at least one application redundant to that of the fourth server; and

a seventh server for hosting a seventh virtual portal having at least one application redundant to that of the fifth server.

4. An intelligent, program controlled system is provided, the system having programming for identifying taxable financial transactions, collecting data based on the transactions, calculating any taxes due on the transactions, reporting the same to a selected government authority, and periodically remitting funds corresponding to the tax owed to the government authorities over an interactive communications network, the system comprising:

a first server for hosting a first virtual portal having at least one application for providing e-content to end users, the application including a network browser for accessing, displaying and transmitting data over the network;

a second server for hosting a second virtual portal having at least one application for receiving data from the first server and for parsing the data received;

a communications infrastructure linking the first and second servers to one another;

a third server for hosting a third virtual portal having at least one application for receiving transactional data from the second server, parsing the data received for XML-based data, interpreting the XML-based data for selected data processing operations, storing the XML-based data in a first selected file of a first database, computing any taxes due on the corresponding transaction and storing the tax due in a second selected first database file; and

a fourth server for hosting a fourth virtual portal having

at least one application for receiving XML-based data from the third server, converting the second selected first database file from an XML-based format to a TXP-based format for receipt by an automated clearinghouse network, and periodically transmitting the second file, through the network, to a selected financial institution for remission of funds corresponding to the transactional data to the government authority; and

at least one application for insuring system security over the interactive communications network, for system backup and recovery operations, for system real-time and continuous accessibility, for operating system monitoring and for system load balancing and scalability.

5. An intelligent, program controlled system is provided, the system having programming for identifying taxable financial transactions, collecting data based on the transactions, calculating any taxes due on the transactions, reporting the same to a selected government authority, and periodically remitting funds corresponding to the tax owed to the government authorities over an interactive communications network, the system comprising:

a first server for hosting a first virtual portal having at least one application for providing

e-content to end users, the application including a network browser for accessing, displaying and transmitting data over the network;

a second server for hosting a second virtual portal having at least one application for receiving data from the first server and for parsing the data received;

5 a communications infrastructure linking the first and second servers to one another;

a third server for hosting a third virtual portal having at least one application for receiving transactional data from the second server, parsing the data received for XML-based data, interpreting the XML-based data for selected data processing operations, storing the XML-based data in a first selected file of a first database, computing any taxes due on the corresponding transaction and storing the tax due in a second selected first database file;

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a fourth server for hosting a fourth virtual portal having

at least one application for receiving XML-based data from the third server, converting the second selected first database file from an XML-based format to a TXP-based format for receipt by an automated clearinghouse network, and periodically transmitting the second file, through the network, to a selected financial institution for remission of funds corresponding to the transactional data to the government authority; and

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at least one application for insuring system security over the interactive communications network, for system backup and recovery operations, for system real-time and continuous accessibility, for operating system monitoring and for system load balancing and scalability;

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a fifth server for hosting a fifth virtual portal having at least one application redundant to that of the third server; and

a sixth server for hosting a sixth virtual portal having at least one application redundant

to that of the fourth server.

6. An intelligent, program controlled, service provider system having programming for identifying taxable financial transactions, collecting data based on the transactions, calculating any taxes due on the transactions, reporting the same to a selected government authority, and periodically remitting funds corresponding to the tax owed to the government authority over an interactive communications network, the system comprising:

a first server for hosting a first virtual portal having at least one application for providing e-content to end users, the application including a network browser for accessing, displaying and transmitting data over the network;

a second server for hosting a second virtual portal having at least one application for receiving data from the first server and for parsing the data received;

a communications infrastructure linking the first and second servers to one another;

a third server for hosting a third virtual portal having at least one application for receiving data from the second server, parsing the data received for XML-based data and interpreting the XML-based data for selected data processing operations; and

a fourth server for processing XML-based data from the third server, the fourth server including

a network service module having a plurality of modular functions, which comprise an applications module, a database module, a tax computation module and a tax remittance module, the service module receiving XML-based transactional data, storing the data in a first selected file of the database, computing any taxes due on the corresponding transaction, storing the tax due in a second selected file of the database, converting the second file from an XML-

based format to a TXP-based format for receipt by an automated clearinghouse network, and periodically transmitting the second file, through the network, to a selected financial institution for remission of funds corresponding to the transactional data to the government authority; and

an infrastructure service module having a series of discrete modular functions including a security module for insuring system security over the interactive communications network, a system backup and recovery module, a real-time and continuous accessibility module, a system monitoring module and a system load balancing and scalability module.

7. An intelligent, program controlled, service provider system having programming for identifying taxable financial transactions, collecting data based on the transactions, calculating any taxes due on the transactions, reporting the same to a selected government authority, and periodically remitting funds corresponding to the tax owed to the government authority over an interactive communications network, the system comprising:

a first server for hosting a first virtual portal having at least one application for providing e-content to end users, the application including a network browser for accessing, displaying and transmitting data over the network;

a second server for hosting a second virtual portal having at least one application for receiving data from the first server and for parsing the data received;

a communications infrastructure linking the first and second servers to one another;

a third server for hosting a third virtual portal having at least one application for receiving data from the second server, parsing the data received for XML-based data and interpreting the XML-based data for selected data processing operations; and

a fourth server for processing XML-based data from the third server, the fourth server



including

a network service module having a plurality of modular functions, which comprise an applications module, a database module, a tax computation module and a tax remittance module, the service module receiving XML-based transactional data, storing the data in a first  
 5 selected file of the database, computing any taxes due on the corresponding transaction, storing the tax due in a second selected file of the database, converting the second file from an XML-based format to a TXP-based format for receipt by an automated clearinghouse network, and periodically transmitting the second file, through the network, to a selected financial institution for remission of funds corresponding to the transactional data to the government authority; and

10 an infrastructure service module having a series of discrete modular functions including a security module for insuring system security over the interactive communications network, a system backup and recovery module, a real-time and continuous accessibility module, a system monitoring module and a system load balancing and scalability module;

15 a fifth server for hosting a fifth virtual portal having at least one application redundant to that of the third server; and

a sixth server for hosting a fifth virtual portal having at least one application redundant to that of the fourth server.

20 8. An intelligent, program controlled, service provider system having programming for identifying taxable financial transactions, collecting data based on the transactions, calculating any taxes due on the transactions, reporting the same to a selected government authority, and periodically remitting funds corresponding to the tax owed to the government authority over an interactive communications network, the system comprising:

a first server for hosting a first virtual portal having at least one application for providing e-content to end users, the application including a network browser for accessing, displaying and transmitting data over the network;

a second server for hosting a second virtual portal having at least one application for receiving data from the first server and for parsing the data received;

a communications infrastructure linking the first and second servers to one another;

a third server for hosting a third virtual portal having at least one application for receiving data from the second server, parsing the data received for XML-based data and interpreting the XML-based data for selected data processing operations;

a fourth server for processing XML-based data from the third server, the fourth server hosting a standard interface for receiving the XML-based data, interpreting the XML-based data to determine whether a transaction request is being made, and invoking processing of the XML-based data;

a fifth server for processing XML-based data from the fourth server, the fifth server including

a network service module having a plurality of modular functions, which comprise an applications module, a database module, a tax computation module and a tax remittance module, the service module receiving XML-based transactional data, storing the data in a first selected file of the database, computing any taxes due on the corresponding transaction, storing the tax due in a second selected file of the database, converting the second file from an XML-based format to a TXP-based format for receipt by an automated clearinghouse network, and periodically transmitting the second file, through the network, to a selected financial institution for remission of funds corresponding to the transactional data to the government authority; and

an infrastructure service module having a series of discrete modular functions, including a security module for insuring system security over the interactive communications network, a system backup and recovery module, a real-time and continuous accessibility module, a system monitoring module and a system load balancing and scalability module;

5 a sixth server for hosting a virtual portal having at least one application redundant to that of the fourth server; and

a seventh server for hosting a virtual portal having at least one application redundant to that of the fifth server.

10 9. An intelligent, program controlled, service provider system having programming for identifying taxable financial transactions, collecting data based on the transactions, calculating any taxes due on the transactions, reporting the same to a selected government authority, and periodically remitting funds corresponding to the tax owed to the government authority over an interactive communications network, the system comprising:

15 a first server for hosting a first virtual portal having at least one application for providing e-content to end users, the application including a network browser for accessing, displaying and transmitting data over the network;

a second server for hosting a second virtual portal having at least one application for receiving data from the first server and for parsing the data received;

20 a communications infrastructure linking the first and second servers to one another;

a third server for hosting a third virtual portal having at least one application for receiving data from the second server, parsing the data received for XML-based data and interpreting the XML-based data for selected data processing operations; and

a fourth server for hosting a fourth virtual portal having at least one application for processing XML-based data from the third server, the fourth server including a network service module having a plurality of modular functions, which comprise an applications module, a database module, a tax computation module and a tax remittance module, the service module receiving XML-based transactional data, storing the data in a first selected file of the database, computing any taxes due on the corresponding transaction, storing the tax due in a second selected file of the database, converting the second file from an XML-based format to a TXP-based format for receipt by an automated clearinghouse network, and periodically transmitting the second file, through the network, to a selected financial institution for remission of funds corresponding to the transactional data to the government authority; and

a fifth server for hosting a fifth virtual portal having at least one application for processing XML-based data from the third server, the fifth server including an infrastructure service module having a series of discrete modular functions, including a security module for insuring system security over the interactive communications network, a system backup and recovery module, a real-time and continuous accessibility module, a system monitoring module and a system load balancing and scalability module.

10. An intelligent, program controlled apparatus for identifying taxable financial transactions, collecting data based on the transactions, calculating any taxes due on the transactions, reporting the same to a selected government authority, and periodically remitting funds corresponding to the tax owed to the government authority over an interactive communications network, the apparatus having modular programming which comprises:

an applications module for receiving XML-based transactional data from a Web-based

server and storing the data in a first selected file;

a database module for storing the first selected file;

a tax computation module for computing any taxes due on the corresponding transaction and effecting storage of the tax due in a second selected file of the database; and

5 a tax remittance module for converting the second selected file from an XML-based format to a TXP-based format for use in an automated clearinghouse network and periodically transmitting the file, through the network, to a selected financial institution for remission of funds corresponding to the transactional data to the government authority.

10 11. A program controlled apparatus for identifying taxable financial transactions, collecting data based on the transactions, calculating any taxes due on the transactions, reporting the same to a selected government authority, and periodically remitting funds corresponding to the tax owed to the government authority over an interactive communications network, the apparatus having modular programming which comprises:

15 an interface module for a subscriber system that electronically contacts a service provider system each time a taxable transaction is initiated;

a tax computation module operating on a server of a service provider, the module identifying the jurisdiction from which the merchandise purchased has been shipped, the jurisdiction to which the merchandise is shipped, and the effective tax rates applicable from each  
20 jurisdiction;

a transaction processing module for consummating the transaction requested;

a funds transfer module for automatically receiving information on the transaction consummation and effecting transfer of the funds electronically to an account of a selected

financial institution;

a tax payment module for periodic transfer of funds aggregated in the account to at least one account of the government authority;

a reporting/auditing module for generating interactive reports and for permitting auditing by the government authority; and

a tax return module for automated generation of a tax return and transmitting the return electronically to the government authority.

12. An intelligent, program controlled system having programming for providing tax computation and remittance services over an interactive communications network, the system including:

an applications service for receiving XML-based transactional data from a Web-based server and storing the data in a first selected file;

a database service for storing the first selected file;

a tax computation service for computing any taxes due on the corresponding transaction and effecting storage of the amount in a second selected file of the database; and

a tax remittance service for converting the second selected file from an XML-based format to a TXP-based format for use in an automated clearinghouse network and periodically transmitting the file, through the network, to a selected financial institution for remission of funds corresponding to the transactional data to the government authority.

13. An intelligent, program controlled system having programming for identifying taxable financial transactions, collecting data based on the transactions, calculating any taxes due

on the transactions, reporting the same to a selected government authority, and periodically remitting funds corresponding to the tax owed to the government authority over an interactive communications network, the system comprising:

an applications module for receiving XML-based transactional data from a Web-based server and storing the data in a first selected file;

a database module for storing the first selected file;

a tax computation module for computing any taxes due on the corresponding transaction and effecting storage of the amount in a second selected file of the database; and

a tax remittance module for converting the second selected file from an XML-based format to a TXP-based format for use in an automated clearinghouse network and periodically transmitting the file, through the network, to a selected financial institution for remission of funds corresponding to the transactional data to the government authority.

14. A program controlled system having modular programming for identifying taxable financial transactions, collecting data based on the transactions, calculating any taxes due on the transactions, reporting the same to a selected government authority, and periodically remitting funds corresponding to the tax owed to the government authority over an interactive communications network, the system comprising:

an interface module for a subscriber system that electronically contacts a service provider system each time a taxable transaction is initiated;

a tax computation module operating on a server of a service provider, the module identifying the jurisdiction from which the merchandise purchased has been shipped, the jurisdiction to which the merchandise is shipped, and the effective tax rates applicable from each

jurisdiction;

a transaction processing module for consummating the transaction requested;

a funds transfer module for automatically receiving information on the transaction consummation and effecting transfer of the funds electronically to an account of a selected financial institution;

a tax payment module for periodic transfer of funds aggregated in the account to at least one account of the government authority;

a reporting/auditing module for generating interactive reports and for permitting auditing by the government authority; and

a tax return module for automated generation of a tax return and transmitting the return electronically to the government authority.

15. A method for identifying taxable financial transactions, collecting data based on the transactions, calculating any taxes due on the transactions, reporting the same to a selected government authority, and periodically remitting funds corresponding to the tax owed to the government authority over an interactive communications network, the method comprising the steps of:

- i. sending an XML-based transaction request over the network from a subscriber computer system to a service provider computer system;
- ii. sending the XML-based transaction request from the service provider system to a tax computation module;
- iii. calculating any taxes due for each taxable transaction;
- iv. transmitting a responsive XML-based reply to the subscriber system, the reply



including the tax due and total amount due for the transaction;

- v. displaying on the subscriber system the tax due and total amount due for the transaction;
- vi. accepting the reply so as to consummate the transaction;
- 5 vii. sending a second XML-based request from the subscriber system to the service provider system for activating a module for reporting the tax owed to the government authority, and a module for periodically remitting the tax owed over the network;
- viii. transferring funds corresponding to the amount of the tax owed a service provider account;
- 10 ix. periodically generating a tax return based on the amount of the tax owed and reporting the same electronically to the government authority; and
- x. periodically transferring the funds in payment of the tax owed from the service provider account to the government authority.

15 16. A method for identifying taxable financial transactions, collecting data based on the transactions, calculating any taxes due on the transactions, reporting the same to a selected government authority, and periodically remitting funds corresponding to the tax owed to the government authority over an interactive communications network, the method comprising the steps of:

- 20 i. subscribing a subscriber computer system to a service of a service provider computer system;
- ii. installing software on the subscriber system for enabling communications over the network between the subscriber system and the service provider system;

iii. sending an XML-based transaction request from the subscriber system to the service provider system, the request identifying a class of goods being transacted, the value of a selected item of the goods, the subscriber location, the subscriber's identification number, the time of the message, the date and the shipping location;

5           iv. sending the XML-based transaction request from the service provider system to a tax computation module;

v. calculating any taxes due for each taxable transaction in each applicable jurisdiction;

10          vi. transmitting a responsive XML-based reply to the subscriber system, the reply including the tax due and total amount due for the transaction;

vii. displaying on the subscriber system the tax due and total amount due for the transaction;

viii. accepting the reply so as to consummate the transaction;

15          ix. sending a second XML-based message from the subscriber system to the service provider system for activating a module for reporting the tax owed to the government authority, and for activating a module for periodically remitting funds over the network corresponding to the tax owed to the government authority;

x. periodically generating a tax return based on the amount of the tax owed and reporting the same electronically to the government authority;

20          xi. transferring the funds electronically to a service provider account; and

xii. periodically transferring the funds aggregated in the account from the service provider account to the government authority.